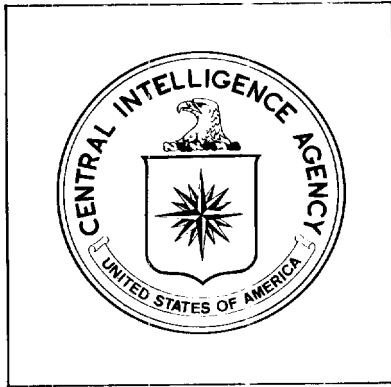


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WESTERN EUROPE – CANADA – INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Western Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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West German Defense Minister Leber Temporarily Off
the Hook

West German Defense Minister Georg Leber thus far has survived the so-called Rall Affair, but some Bonn officials fear that the case is not yet closed.

The controversy began in late September when members of the African National Congress leaked documents, apparently stolen from the South African embassy in Bonn, revealing that General Rall, a prominent member of the Bundeswehr, had visited a nuclear power facility while on a trip to South Africa. The African National Congress claimed that this was evidence that West Germany is supporting Pretoria's efforts to produce nuclear weapons.

Bonn strongly denied the allegation, and claimed that Rall had traveled unofficially and without the knowledge of government officials. Leber, however, had no alternative but to force Rall to resign. Rall was serving as West Germany's representative on NATO's military committee at the time.

Leber himself then came under a cloud when the influential news magazine Der Spiegel on October 20 published a letter in which the South African ambassador told his government that he had discussed the Rall visit personally with Leber, and that the defense minister had cleared the visit on an informal basis.

The case took a bizarre twist recently when the ambassador told the West German Foreign Office that he had misinformed Pretoria and that he had never discussed the general's visit with Leber.

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The West German press has speculated that the ambassador lied to save Leber, but both the foreign office and defense ministry have denied this. The foreign office has also denied that Bonn has asked that the ambassador be recalled, and Pretoria has not removed him so far. Leber has announced that the entire matter is closed.

Officials in the Ministry for Research and Technology fear, however, that additional compromising documents will be made public. A publisher in Bonn has hinted to a US embassy official that the African National Congress has more documents that, if publicized, will further embarrass West German officials. (CONFIDENTIAL NOFORN)

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"Blowing Off Steam" in Ulster

The Provisional IRA shot 17 members of the rival Official IRA within a half hour in the Belfast area on October 29. Only one victim was killed and the rest suffered leg wounds in what are known as "knee capping" punishments.

The reason for the attacks is unclear, but the Official leadership accused the Provos of permitting the violence as a means of allowing their men to "blow off steam" during the cease-fire. The Officials have said, however, they would not retaliate.

London's chief representative in Ulster, Merlyn Rees, told parliament last week that 950 persons in Ulster had been charged with serious terrorist offenses so far this year. Convictions for such crimes increased by 437 over the previous year. Rees said that he was not detaining suspects and had not interfered with the police or prosecutors in their efforts to charge persons arrested.

Rees praised the efforts of the Ulster police, "who have done an extraordinary job" and reduced some of the security load carried by the British military forces in Ulster. He was unable to satisfy one query, however, concerning the near autonomy of south Armagh, long an IRA stronghold.

Nevertheless, Rees gave the impression that the authorities were developing methods for dealing with the current level of violence without the use of detention. If paramilitary action is expanded to brigade and battalion strength, however, Rees admitted that the use of normal police methods would be inadequate. (CONFIDENTIAL NOFORN)

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West German Chancellor Gets Red Carpet in Peking

West German Chancellor Schmidt's visit to China appears to have achieved Bonn's modest goals. The opening banquet in his honor proceeded smoothly despite the contrasting statements of Chinese vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping and Schmidt concerning detente. Yesterday, the Chancellor and Chairman Mao held a meeting that lasted for nearly two hours, highlighting the degree of importance that the Chinese hosts attach to their West German guest.

In response to Teng's harsh criticism of the superpowers during the opening banquet on October 29, the Chancellor stressed that Bonn's close security tie to NATO is the key to the political and military equilibrium in Central Europe. At the same time, he reaffirmed West Germany's commitment to improving relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The most noteworthy part of Teng's speech, from the West German viewpoint, was the absence of any reference to German reunification. Peking's authoritative People's Daily did, however, voice support for the "German people's desire for national reunification" in an editorial shortly before Schmidt's arrival. The article criticized the new Soviet-East German friendship treaty and claimed that Moscow was seeking to "perpetuate the division" of Germany. This support for German unity parallels Peking's own policy of pursuing national reunification and helps dramatize the "illegal" character of the Soviet presence in Central Europe and, by implication, in Northeast Asia. Officials in Bonn do not place much weight on Chinese verbal support because it has little real significance.

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Schmidt's conversation with Mao began--surprisingly--with a dialogue on broad philosophical topics--the kind of subject matter that the pragmatic-minded Schmidt usually avoids. The two leaders reportedly discussed philosophers Immanuel Kant and Ernst Haeckel, and the famous nineteenth-century military strategist, Karl von Clausewitz. According to a press spokesman, the Chancellor was impressed with Mao's mental alertness and power of judgement, and described their conversation as "frank, open-minded, and friendly."

After returning from a quick visit to the Great Wall, the Chancellor will preside later today over the signing of a bilateral accord establishing air service between Frankfurt and Peking. Tomorrow, he will go to Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang province, before flying to Tehran for talks with the Shah. Schmidt will be the first western statesman to visit the strategic region of Sinkiang which forms China's western border with the Soviet Union. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Socialists Gain in Swiss Election

The Socialists--the senior partner in the four-party governing coalition--were the big winners in the national election on October 19. By picking up an additional nine parliamentary seats for a total of 55, the Socialists, remain the largest party in Switzerland. Their success also stands in marked contrast to the records of some other socialist parties in Europe which have lost support in recent elections.

The net gain for the four-party coalition was seven seats, with one of the three center parties gaining two seats and the others losing two seats each. The coalition took most of its new seats from the four small rightwing parties, which lost a third of their representatives. The Communists lost one seat, giving them only four in the new parliament, and a Maoist splinter faction picked up one seat.

The major losers were the Republicans and the National Action Party which dropped a total of five seats. Dissension in the parties' ranks and a lessened concern about excessive numbers of foreigners in Switzerland, owing to the recession-induced departure of many foreign workers, probably contributed to the heavy losses.

The government parties are expected to remain in coalition with few, if any, changes in personnel. The election reflected Switzerland's continuing political stability, with only a slight shift in voter preferences on domestic matters and none in the field of foreign affairs. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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WFTU and WCL Woo ICFTU - Unsuccessfully

Earlier this month, the communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) held its first general council meeting in Paris since its expulsion from France in 1951. The most significant development to come out of the sessions was a message to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which held its congress in Mexico City last week. The carefully-worded message adroitly conveyed an assumed identity of viewpoint between the two organizations on such key matters as the crisis of capitalism, the evils of multinational corporations and so forth. WFTU's long-range strategy is obvious. It is appealing for increased contacts in the "interest of the working class" and "international detente" and is ready to put the onus on the ICFTU for failing to be receptive. The ICFTU, in fact, does not intend to respond and did not bring up the appeal during its congress.

The predominantly Christian-oriented World Confederation of Labor (WCL) also held a council meeting, attended by 250 delegates from 75 countries, in Belgium on October 7-10. The main purpose was to discuss an action program aimed at an eventual merger with ICFTU--a proposal adopted at the confederation's 1973 congress. The Latin American delegates--backed by the Africans--fiercely opposed the initiative on the grounds that a merger between the regional affiliates of the WCL and the ICFTU in Latin America would be unworkable. The two affiliates--CLAT and ORIT respectively--have been bitter rivals for many years and this situation, of course, is a major roadblock to a

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ICFTU-WCL merger. WCL, including the Latin Americans, is not averse, however, to finding ways to cooperate with ICFTU on such issues of mutual concern as multinational corporations, Spain and raw materials policy.

WCL officials admit that it could take as long as ten years to bring about a formal merger. In fact, the WCL may not survive that long, given its present decline as an organization. Its European group was disbanded last year and the major affiliates joined with the newly-established European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)--itself thus far an undynamic organization. Other setbacks include the loss of WCL's largest Asian affiliate--with the end of the war in Vietnam--and ineffective and misguided leadership by subordinates (CLAT leaders) as a result of the general secretary's nervous breakdown. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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